

NUTRITION TO GO

FOOD SAFETY MYTHBUSTERS

TRUE or FALSE?

1. The best way to thaw frozen meat or poultry is to leave it out on the counter.

FALSE. Leaving food at room temperature for more than an hour can lead to unhealthy bacteria growth and can make you sick from food-borne illness. The best way to thaw frozen meat is to leave it in the refrigerator or heat it slowly in the microwave on the "defrost" setting.

TIP:

Meat defrosted in the microwave must be cooked immediately.



2. Vegetables or fruits with thick skin or a rind do not need to be washed.

FALSE. You should always wash vegetables and fruits before eating them, even if the skin or rind will be removed.

TIP:

Gently rub fruits and vegetables under warm water. For firmer vegetables and fruits, scrub with a brush.



3. Cross-contamination CAN happen in the refrigerator.

TRUE. Fresh vegetables and fruits can get raw meat, poultry and fish drippings on them, which can make you sick when you eat the fresh vegetables and fruits.

TIP:

Place fresh fruits and vegetables and ready-to-eat foods above raw meat in the refrigerator.



4. Leftovers are only safe to eat for 3 to 4 days.

TRUE. Refrigerated leftovers should only be eaten for 3 to 4 days after they are made. When in doubt, throw it out!

TIP:

Freeze leftovers so you can enjoy them another time and reduce food waste.



FOOD SAFETY FOR OLDER ADULTS

Adults over the age of 65 have a higher risk for getting a food-borne illness (or food poisoning). This is because as a person gets older, their immune system weakens. This can make it easier to get sick from food poisoning.

Follow the tips and tricks below to stay food safe.

Tips to Stay Food Safe:

Food Storage

- Keep your refrigerator at or below 40°F.
- Keep your freezer at 0°F.
- Clean your fruit and vegetable drawer and refrigerator regularly.
- Store raw meats in a deep container below fruits and vegetables and ready-to-eat foods.

Food Preparation

- Before preparing food, clean and sanitize all surfaces, and wash your hands.
- Avoid using cutting boards that are worn or have deep grooves because they can be harder to clean.
- Use a food thermometer when cooking.



Cook raw meat, poultry, and fish to these temperatures:

- Poultry: 165°F
- Roasts and steaks: 145°F
- Fish: 145°F
- Ground meats: 160°F

***Check out our healthy recipes at:
<https://web.uri.edu/snaped/recipes>**

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